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House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. YARMUTH).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 25, 2010.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN A. YARMUTH to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

CONGRESS NEEDS TO CONTROL FEDERAL SPENDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, recently, Speaker PELOSI sent a letter to her committee chairmen asking all of them to chip away at Federal budgetary spending. In addition, Majority Leader HOYER recently wrote an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal urging for shared sacrifice to address the budget crisis this country is facing. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, their rhetoric does not match up to reality.

Budget Chairman JOHN SPRATT even said, "If you can't budget, you can't

govern." Let me repeat that. This is what the Chairman of the Budget Committee said: "If you can't budget, you can't govern." I could not agree more.

It is becoming increasingly clear, Mr. Speaker, however, that House Democrats cannot budget. American families and small businesses are making tough choices in this economic climate. But Democrats continue to spend and to spend.

The Federal Government is spending more per household than ever before and running up a \$1.5 trillion deficit in 2010, the largest deficit since the end of World War II.

Now, how much is \$1 trillion? If you started at day one, at 1 A.D., and spent \$1 million every day, you still would not have spent \$1 trillion.

Despite deficits and debts as far as the eye can see, Democrat leaders do not plan to even pass a budget resolution. Since 1974, when the modern budget process was created, the House has never failed to pass a budget resolution. Speaker PELOSI and Leader HOYER can send all the letters and publish all the op-eds they want, but it does not change the fact there is no significant or legitimate plan to rein in Federal spending or reduce the deficit by them.

The Federal Government now spends over \$31,000 per household, the highest ever. Recent budget deficits have reached unprecedented levels, accounting for 11 percent of the GDP. By comparison, the historical budget deficits, a yearly debt deficit, is only 2.9 percent of the GDP in the past.

Publicly held debt is expected to climb to \$15 trillion by 2020, and when combined with rising interest rates in a post-recovery economic environment, the interest payments on government debt also will skyrocket. CBO projects that the government's annual spending on net interest will more than triple between 2010 and 2020 from \$207 billion to \$723 billion; just the interest. These

deficits are appalling and all more shocking since CBO based these calculations on the complete expiration of the Bush tax cuts, that the alternative minimum tax will never be patched, and that future appropriations would be indexed to inflation. This is something Congress never will do.

Since Democrats have taken over Congress in January 2007, the national debt has increased 42.4 percent. While the Democrat leadership talks a good game about addressing spending, we have yet to see any real action by them.

The first step is to pass a budget to provide us with a blueprint, a simple road map for deficit reduction. The Balanced Budget Act of 1985 set the target date for a budget for April 15, the same day as Tax Day for most Americans. Unfortunately, the April 15 deadline for enacting a budget resolution has long since passed, and we still have no sign of a budget resolution. The Senate has not passed a budget, and the House has not even begun the simple process.

Without a budget, there are no controls in place to rein in spending. It's a sign that Congress lacks the leadership and the willingness to set a framework to limit spending or control entitlement growth. Not passing a budget resolution sends a message to the American taxpayers that Congress is really not serious about addressing the fiscal crisis here, and is unable to meet the challenges of uncontrolled spending and runaway deficits.

This entire situation, obviously, is getting out of control. When someone goes for debt counseling, the first step is to cut up the credit cards and live within your means. Congress needs to rein in Federal spending and to start living within its means. The answers are not higher taxes on out-of-work Americans, such as a Value Added Tax. That's why I've joined with my colleagues to send a letter to the National

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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